

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT
June 11, 2003

ITEM: 7

SUBJECT: TENTATIVE ORDER NO. R9-2003-0111, GENERAL WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR DISCHARGES OF TREATED GROUNDWATER FROM VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUND CLEANUP SITES TO LAND IN THE SAN DIEGO REGION (*Julie Chan*)

PURPOSE: Consider adoption of Tentative Order No. R9-2003-0111

PUBLIC NOTICE: The public was notified of this item in the agenda for the June 11, 2003 meeting of the Regional Board. This notification satisfies the requirements of State Government Code section 11125 for a 10-day notice.

DISCUSSION: Tentative Order No. R9-2003-0111 establishes General Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for the disposal of groundwater, pumped and treated to remove volatile organic compounds, into the same hydrogeologic unit from which it was pumped. The General WDRs are needed because disposal options for treated groundwater are becoming limited in the San Diego Region (9). In most areas, local wastewater treatment systems lack the capacity to accept treated groundwater. Disposal of treated groundwater in surface streams is problematic because, in most cases, the treated groundwater does not meet the effluent limitations for chemical constituents contained in the Regional Board order which regulates the discharge of treated groundwater to surface streams.

The proposed General WDRs are for the disposal of treated groundwater to land by direct injection through a well, or by rapid percolation or infiltration through the soil. The treated groundwater may contain chemical constituents, like total dissolved solids, chloride, sulfate, or metals, in concentrations that exceed applicable water quality objectives for groundwater contained in the Water Quality Control Plan, San Diego Basin. This may not be due to the treatment process, but rather, because parts of the San Diego region contain groundwaters with ambient background concentrations of chemical constituents that exceed applicable water quality objectives.

Discharges of treated groundwater to land with ambient background concentrations of chemical constituents in excess of water quality objectives will have a low threat to water quality if the treated groundwater is discharged to the same aquifer from which it was extracted and to receiving groundwater with the same or poorer water quality. Thus, discharges regulated under the proposed General WDRs must meet these criteria.

The Regional Board found that the environmental impacts of the proposed General WDRs would be less than significant, and prepared a Negative Declaration for this project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act. A resolution certifying the Negative Declaration for this project is the subject of Item 6 of the June 11, 2003 Board meeting agenda.

LEGAL CONCERNS: None

SUPPORTING
DOCUMENTS:

1. Tentative Order No. R9-2003-0111 and Attachments:
 - A. Application / Report of Waste Discharge Package.
 - B. Tentative Monitoring and Reporting Program No. R9-2003-0111.
 - C. Waste Discharge Prohibitions.
 - D. Standard Provisions Applicable to Waste Discharge Requirements.
2. Staff Report.
3. Letters transmitting the tentative order for public review and comment.
4. Response to Comments.

RECOMMENDATION: Regional Board staff recommends adoption of Tentative Order No. R9-2003-0111.